

## Pesticides

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has suspended production of 2 pesticides—heptachlor & chloradane—which were widely used in home, lawn & garden pest control. EPA found heptachlor & chloradane to be cancer-causing. EPA's action has raised some questions for consumers who were using these products & now must dispose of them & try to find substitutes.

How do you dispose of the pesticides? According to EPA, the important thing to avoid is disposal by dumping your remaining stocks into drains, sewer systems, streams, ponds or other water supplies. Care should also be taken not to dump pesticides on land where they might reach water supplies or cause other environmental damage.

EPA advises that a good way to dispose of small amounts of the pesticides is simply to use them, following label instructions & avoiding use on food crops. However, if you follow this method, take care not to inhale the products or get them on your clothing. In addition, EPA warns that you keep children & pets away from contaminated areas as they can track the soil into your home.

If you don't want to use your remaining supplies, you can wrap bottles containing less than 5 pounds (2.3 kilograms) or one gallon (3.8 liters) in several layers of paper to prevent breakage & then put them in the trash. Or if you live on a farm or have a house with a yard, you can bury bottles of small amounts at least 18 inches (46 centimeters) deep in places where they will not get into water supplies. With larger quantities (more than 5 pounds or one gallon), EPA suggests that you take the remaining stocks to landfills especially designated for the disposal of hazardous materials. For more information on how to dispose of these pesticides, contact the EPA regional office for your area or local authorities concerned with pesticide control.

EPA says that a number of other pesticides can be substituted for the same general uses as heptachlor & chloradane. Complete list of these alternatives is available free from Public Information Center (PM-875), Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC 20460.

# consumer news

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
Office of Consumer Affairs  
Virginia H. Knauer, Director

Vol. 5, No. 17, Sept. 1, 1975

## 1976 cars: miles per gallon data

Now that 1976 model cars are arriving at dealers' showrooms, consumers who want a new car will begin to study the 1976 models & make their selections based on such factors as price, size & driveability. But with the rising cost of gasoline still a major issue, consumers also will be taking into account another consideration in car selection: fuel efficiency—or the number of miles per gallon they can get from the car.

To help consumers determine the fuel economy of 1976 cars, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), together with Federal Energy Administration (FEA), has developed a labeling program that will provide miles per gallon information about most of the new car models. Program is voluntary, but 18 auto manufacturers have agreed to participate. They will place stickers on all of their new cars & light-duty trucks, giving estimates of how many miles each can be driven on a gallon of gas.

Under the program, manufacturers have the choice of labeling:

1. Giving miles per gallon figures for test vehicles that are within the same car line-engine size group. A car line-engine size group consists of cars that have same engine size, same number of cylinders, same type carburetor, same type transmission & same emission control system. According to FEA, this label will probably be the most widely used because it corresponds to the EPA-FEA mileage guide for new car buyers.
2. Giving the miles per gallon figure for that specific car. If they choose this method, manufacturers must also provide information on car's engine size, weight, number of cylinders in the engine, number of barrels in the carburetor, type of transmission, rear axle ratio & type of emission control system.

Miles per gallon figures that appear on the labels are derived at the time EPA tests cars to certify that they meet Federal auto emission standards. Manufacturers ship cars to EPA's test laboratory in Ann Arbor, MI. Cars, placed on a platform (dynamometer) are driven on 2 pre-set driving cycles—one simulating city driving patterns & other simulating highway driving. EPA uses hydrocarbon, carbon monoxide & carbon dioxide emissions collected during the 2 cycles to calculate city & highway fuel economy figures. These figures, however, are only estimates of the mileage you can get with the new model cars. Therefore, on each label will be a reminder that the fuel economy achieved by any car varies with the owner's driving habits, optional equipment & how well the car is maintained.

Manufacturers who have agreed to participate in the program are American Motors, Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Avanti, Checker, Volkswagen, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, British Leyland, Rolls Royce, Isuzu, Honda, Toyo Kogyo, Nissan, Toyota, Mitsubishi & Saab-Scania.

EPA & FEA have also published *Gas Mileage Guide for New Car Buyers*, which is free by writing Fuel Economy, Pueblo, CO 81009.

## Money back

In the first action of its kind, Housing & Urban Development Dept.'s (HUD) Office of Interstate Land Sales Registration has successfully sued for return of money to dissatisfied property owners.

Following HUD's action, a U.S. District Court ordered the Beard Land Co. of Tyler, TX, to set up a \$50,000 escrow account to make refunds of 114 owners of property in one of Beard's developments—Pineywoods Lake Resort in Texas.

The suit resulted from problems arising more than 2 years ago when HUD discovered that Pineywoods was violating Federal law by selling lots without offering prospective owners a Property Report & without first registering with HUD. But although it was informally agreed that Pineywoods would offer complete refunds to everyone who bought lots there during the 2-year period (October 30, 1971 to March 20, 1973), the 114 consumers who requested their refund did not get their money back. HUD therefore went to court for the return of the money.

The court order also offered refunds to property owners who bought lots during the 2-year period but did not originally request the refund. Under the order, these consumers will get \$100 cash immediately & the balance of their refund within a year.

## Local postmarks

Consumers may soon know where their mail comes from without consulting a ZIP Code directory. Postmarks soon will include the name of the community where the mail is processed—if it is one of the 350 cities having mail processing centers—plus the state abbreviation & ZIP Code.

Program is result of a test conducted by Postal Service (PS) earlier this year. Comments from consumers during the test indicated they wanted this additional information on their postmarks.

It has always been possible to have the postmark of the city or town appear on mail as long as consumers deposited mail in designated collection boxes or slots at a post office.

That policy will continue. Cities, such as New York, Chicago & Washington, have always used their local postmarks. PS dropped local names from postmarks in 1970 when PS established area mail-processing centers.



## American Indian jewelry . . .

In recent months, more & more "American Indian silver jewelry" has been sold throughout the country. For most consumers, this is a "blind" purchase—a product bought on faith, because of the lack of expertise in judging item's worth or authenticity.

Because authentic handcrafted American Indian jewelry is expensive—and because government agencies at all levels have been receiving complaints from consumers who believe they have been defrauded, CONSUMER NEWS has these suggestions on how consumers can protect themselves:

Q. What is American Indian jewelry?

A. American Indian jewelry is usually made of silver & formed into a flower or other design from nature. It is or appears to be hammered out & formed by hand. Usually, the stone set in this silver jewelry is blue turquoise; however, coral & translucent white moonstone are also used by Indians. Older jewelry has the stones set in the customary way & in traditional designs, but new jewelry often is highly polished with all 3 stones—turquoise, coral & moonstone—which are formed into a flat, smooth, contemporary design.

Q. What is the most important factor to consider when buying American Indian jewelry?

A. Be sure to buy from a reputable dealer.

Look for a dealer with an established place of business. He or she will be available later to answer complaints or questions you may have. Many dealers travel from place to place, selling from motel or hotel rooms that they rent for only a few days. Therefore, you usually have no way to locate them later if you have complaints.

Many dealers belong to the Indian Arts & Crafts Association (IACA), a trade association whose 600 members guarantee that their merchandise is honestly represented when they sell it to you. If you later learn the jewelry is not what it was claimed to be, you can get your money back. You may want to look for the IACA insignia when you are shopping for American Indian jewelry.

You also may want to check the shops in your local or nearby museums. In Washington, DC, for instance, both the Smithsonian Museum Shops & Indian Crafts Shop at Interior Dept. sell American Indian jewelry. So do shops in many national parks. You might also contact crafts organizations to find out whether any Indian craftsmen, in your area, sell jewelry.

Q. What questions should I ask a dealer to help me determine the true value of a piece of jewelry?

A. Experts suggest that you keep these 4 questions in mind:

- Is it made by Indians? Much jewelry of American Indian design now being sold is made by people who are not American Indians.

- Is it handmade? Some jewelry may have a handmade appearance, but it is actually machinemade.

- Are the stones untreated natural turquoise? Because the supply of good hard turquoise is dwindling, a lot of low-quality softer turquoise is being used. Since this tends to crumble, it is being processed in various ways to make it hard & also to enhance its color. (Coral, which is also used in Indian jewelry, is still abundant.)

## ... questions & answers

• Is it made of sterling silver? Sterling is an alloy that mixes silver & copper in a proportion that meets an international standard (925 parts silver to 75 parts copper). If a piece is represented as being sterling, it should meet this standard. Some American Indian jewelry appears to be sterling silver, but it is not.

Q. Is it important to get "Yes" answers to all those questions?

A. Not necessarily. It depends on what you want.

If you simply want a bracelet with a design that pleases you, you may not care if it is machinemade by non-Indians. Or if you are buying an inexpensive pair of earrings, it may not matter if they are not sterling silver, or if the turquoise stones are poor quality.

But if you are spending your money as an investment in a squash-blossom necklace that is supposed to be an authentic, handmade American Indian piece, you certainly want to be sure that the necklace is actually what it is represented as being.

Important factor is that the dealer should not misrepresent the jewelry—that he should tell you honestly whether it is handmade or machinemade, whether it is made by an American Indian craftsman, an American non-Indian craftsman or a craftsman in another country.

Q. Are there any clues that I can look for on the jewelry to indicate its value or authenticity?

A. Very few, unfortunately.

Only one tribe—the Hopi—uses an identification mark on its silver pieces. The Hopi hallmark appears on the inside of each piece, along with the craftsman's individual hallmark. Occasionally, you will find a particularly fine piece from some other tribe that carries a signature or a hallmark, but this is unusual.

In fact, some "clues" may only confuse you. For example, some dealers will point out that handmade jewelry has irregularities—it's not perfect—while machinemade jewelry is regular & balanced—it appears perfect. It would seem, then, that an irregular shape would be a clue to a piece of jewelry being handmade. On the other hand, other dealers point out that the best handmade pieces are perfectly regular. So irregular shape may or may not be a clue to handmade jewelry.

Q. Where can I learn more about judging & buying Indian jewelry?

A. Here are several sources.

**Indian Arts & Crafts Board** is an operating agency of Interior Dept. It publishes a bibliography of Indian crafts, as well as directories of Indian craftsmen who market their jewelry. Write to Indian Arts & Crafts Board, Interior Dept., Washington, DC 20240.

Another source that could answer specific questions is the All Indian Pueblo Council Consumer Education & Advocacy Program, 1015 Indian School Rd. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107. **Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA)** has worked with this program, which has received funding from **Health, Education & Welfare Dept.**

Q. Is there any legislation to protect consumers?

A. Yes, although enforcement is often difficult.

There is a Federal law (Indian Arts & Crafts Board Act, PL 74-355) that makes it illegal to misrepresent Indian products, & there are also laws in 9 states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico & South Dakota).

Q. Whom can I contact if I suspect jewelry was misrepresented?

IACA will help consumers determine authenticity of Indian jewelry. For information about their procedure, write to Box 1358, Gallup, NM 87301, or call 505-722-9488.

## What's up, Doc?

Consumers visit their doctors more than 3 times each year but mostly for preventive medicine. This was the finding of the nation's first systematic study of physicians' practices conducted by the **National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)**.

The study, based on information gathered by NCHS during the **National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey**, was conducted from May 1973 through April 1974 & sampled approximately 1,450 doctors across the country.

During that time, doctors reported:

- 645 million visits were made to doctors' offices in the U.S.

- More than 40% of all visits were made to general or family doctors;

- Over 26% of consumers' office visits were to specialists, with 28.5% being to surgical specialists.

- Over half of all the visits were for special conditions or examinations without sickness (17.1%); diseases of the respiratory system (15.1%); diseases of the circulatory system (9.2%); diseases of the nervous system & sense organs (7.9%).

Top reasons consumers gave for seeing a doctor were: progress visits (11.7%); physical examination (4%); pain in the lower extremity (2.9%); pain in the back region (2.9%); cough (2.8%); abdominal pain (2.5%); colds (2.1%); gynecological examination (2%); visit for medication (2%); headache (1.9%); fatigue (1.8%); pain in the chest (1.8%); well baby exam (1.7%); fever (1.5%); allergic skin reaction (1.5%).

A free copy of the **National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey** is available from National Center for Health Statistics, Room 8-20, Parklawn Building, Rockville, MD 20852.

## Different name

Correct name for ASTM is the **American Society for Testing & Materials**. **CONSUMER NEWS**: July 1 referred to it as the **Association of Standards & Test Materials**. ASTM is the nation's largest developer of standards for materials, products, systems & services. Its work includes developing a universal method for determining octane ratings for gasoline.



## Recall

● **CARS**—National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has told Ford Motor Co. to recall 600,000 Mustangs & Cougars (1968 & 1969 models) because of defects in the seat back pivot pin brackets of both front seats. NHTSA said bracket failures can cause sudden partial collapse of the front seat backs, resulting in loss of vehicle control & possible accidents & injuries. Ford is opposing the recall order.

**What To Do:** Until this matter is settled in the courts, NHTSA advises to avoid putting undue pressure on seat backs—such as pressing against the back to adjust clothing.

## Reduced-acid o.j.

**Food & Drug Administration** (FDA) has issued a temporary permit to the Coca Cola Co., allowing it to test market a frozen concentrated orange juice that deviates from the Federal standard in that a portion of the citric acid has been removed. The permit runs for 24 months, starting not later than Nov. 4, 1975. Product will be labeled "Reduced Acid Frozen Concentrated Orange Juice."

FDA permits such deviations from standards to test advantages to & acceptance by consumers of new food variations. For further information regarding the terms, location & other specifics of the test or reaction to the test, write to **Food & Drug Administration**, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

## Vehicle safety investigations

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has opened one new investigation, suspended 2 for the time being & stopped one in its continuing study of safety related problems of cars, motorcycle helmets, tires, child car seats & motorhomes. An investigation does not mean that there is a defect in each listed, but that a safety related problem has been reported. In each case, NHTSA wants to find the cause of the problem & how the problem can be remedied.

STATUS	CASE	MAKE & MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEM
New	C5-32	Fruhling Saf-T-Release Motorcycle Helmet Fastener	all	strap fastener	fastener may open while in use
Suspended Nov. 30, 1974	C3-02	Honda CB750, CB500, CB450 (K3 & K4)	all	gas tank filler cap	cap becomes dislodged, allowing gasoline to be ignited
Suspended June 30, 1974	291	Mercury Capri	1971	emission system	alleged underhood fires due to evaporative emission system malfunction
Stopped	248	International Harvester 1600, 1700S, 1800	1958-70	brake shoe	alleged shoe separation from shoe web, causing possible brake shoe failure. <b>CONCLUSION:</b> separation does not increase stopping distance or necessarily result in a broken web end.

Consumers with any of the problems with the above makes & models (including those listed as suspended) may give NHTSA useful information by writing to **Office of Consumer Affairs, Transportation Dept., Washington, DC 20590**. Include make, model, year & serial number.

For free copy of NHTSA's complete report, write to **Vehicle Safety Investigations Report, Pueblo, CO 81009**.

CONSUMER NEWS is published the 1st & 15th of each month by the Office of Consumer Affairs, Health, Education & Welfare Dept., to report Federal Government programs for consumers. Use of funds for printing this publication approved by the Director of the Office of Management & Budget, June 27, 1973. Authorization to reproduce any or all items is granted. Editorial address is CONSUMER NEWS, Office of Consumer Affairs, Washington, DC 20201 (telephone: 202-245-6877); Ed Riner, Editor; Nancy Glick, Acting Managing Editor. Sold by Consumer Information, Pueblo, CO 81009; subscription \$4 a year, payable to "Supt. of Documents." Send address change to Supt. of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE:1975—584-717/27  
DHEW PUBLICATION NO. (OS) 75-108

DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE  
OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

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**Consumer News: Sept. 1**

